

THE POCAHONTAS TIMES

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CALVIN W. PRICE, Editor.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1923

They sprung a new word on me the other day. I knew no more what it meant than a rabbit would. It was the word quodlibet, used by schoolmen of the Middle Ages to designate the subtle questions in casuistry on which they delighted to exercise their reasoning powers. The literal definition or translation of the word is "as you please," and was practiced by reasoners then as now who took a subject that was not capable of proof and did as they pleased with it. One of the most fruitful subjects was angels. Thomas Aquinas wrote three hundred and fifty-eight articles on angels. One of the articles was devoted to prove that the body of an angel was made of thick air. Another was whether more than one angel could occupy the same space. And another was how much an angel weighed.

Then the scoffers had a ting at the quodlibet. Giordano Bruno wrote a satire on: Whether a chimera ruminating in a vacuum devoureth second intentions.

I was figuring on writing one and I was going to take for my subject the identity of the two soldiers who got up early on Monday morning, October 10, 1774, in their camp at the mouth of the Great Kanawha River, and went out to hunt deer. And having proceeded up the Ohio River about two miles ran into a body of Indians so great that they could not stand closely packed on four acres. One of the hunters was killed on the spot but the other ran back to the camp and gave the alarm and in a few minutes the battle of Point Pleasant was on. Gen. Cornstalk had collected a force sufficient to surprise and overwhelm the army of white settlers under General Andrew Lewis and but for the chance discovery in time there would have been nothing left of our army and the United States would not have been formed, and so forth.

So it struck me that too little attention had been paid to the two hunters and I commenced to browse through the books at hand and found that good deal of attention after all had been paid to the subject. Most of the historians say that two men of Captain Russell's company ran on the Indians before sunrise, and others that two men of Captain Shelby's company brought in the word. But I have rejected all the evidence except what is contained in the letter that Isaac Shelby, a young soldier in the battle, wrote to his uncle John Shelby, for he disposes of the matter in a positive way. The only two companies that had joined Lewis from Fincastle County, now Kentucky and points beyond, were the men under Captain Russell and Captain Shelby, the father of the young man who wrote the letter, Captain Evan Shelby. The young man afterwards was the first governor of Kentucky.

The Fincastle troops were to meet Lewis who had brought the army down from Lewisburg. Lewis's army was the largest that had been assembled on American soil up to that time and he was determined to wipe out the Indian Shawnee towns in the Chillicothe part of Ohio.

They had no idea that they were in any danger because the army seemed to be too strong for an Indian attack but Cornstalk almost got them. If it had not been for the hunters in the dim grey dawn of the morning, few if any of soldiers would have got back home. As it was they fought face to face all day long and the Indians retired that night because Col. Christian and the rest of the Kentucky troops got there by a night march.

This war had been in the making since April of 1774. The settlers were swarming across the Allegheny. Daniel Boone and others were finding out about the rich lands of Kentucky, and enough population had gone there to make a county called Fincastle. Way down in the Tennessee part of North Carolina the people claimed to be Virginians still, taking the state line with them as they moved. It was apparent that as soon as winter broke in 1774 that there was serious trouble on the border. Col. Wm. Preston was in charge of the defense of the settlers there. He was also the surveyor of that county of Fincastle. He sent a messenger to Kentucky early that year to warn the white people that Indian raids were about to begin. He asked for the best man that they could get for the purpose and so they sent him Daniel Boone.

And when Lewis marched his Botetourt soldiers and the Augusta men, and the two Kentucky companies down the New River and the Great Kanawha, he was expecting to meet the Kentucky men, and halted at Point Pleasant to make a junction with them from the south, while Dunmore brought his part of the army down in boats.

Young Isaac Shelby says that the two men that got up before daylight and discovered that they were about to be overwhelmed with Indians were two men of his father's company, Val Seyler and James Robertson. And he also mentions the other two men that came in contact with the Indians but does not give their names. They were Mooney and Hickman, the latter being the one that was killed, and the first to fall in that battle.

This James Robertson had moved down on the Holston and when they finally took up the slack in the State line and made it straight he fell to Tennessee and played a great part in the history of that State, having later become a general.

He was a man of great force of character. At the time he married in Virginia he could not read or write and his wife taught him.

While the question of two men was being investigated in a way, Mr. W. A. Bratton mailed me from Madison, West Virginia, photograph copies of two letters that James Robertson had written in the year 1774 to Col. Wm. Preston, without knowing that I was tracing this very man.

Mr. Bratton got the copies from

the Wisconsin Historical Association at Madison, Wisconsin, which pays a good deal more attention to what happened on the creek that you live on here in the Virginian mountains a hundred and seventy years ago than you do. His reason for getting these copies along with others was that he saw by the calendar that Coal River was mentioned in them and as he is now practicing law in Boone County formed by Coal River, he ordered the copies.

Monday 23d of June, 1774, Blue Stone

Sir: This instant recd your letter by Henry Atkins and Andrew Woods. We are just returned from Cole River. There we tarried some time endeavoring to make discoveries of Indians or their signs, though could see none. Here we are killing some meat and dressing it for our next journey to Cole River, which if not raining we will set off tomorrow, though the distance from Culberson's to Cole River is much more than we expected. It is at least sixty or seventy miles and really a bad way. We imagine the most proper place to watch the War Road in the matter of the enemy should they come in is about forty miles below Culberson's as they ever have made that a place of rendezvous, killing meat and equipping themselves before they made the attacks on the inhabitants. Sir, I am certain that you may depend on our discharging our duty, and the trust imposed in us.

Your humble servants,
James Robertson
Henry Hayes
Wm. Hallem

P. S. If you possibly could, send us some powder that is good. It would oblige us as what we have is so bad that we can scarcely kill provision. Send us a few sheets of paper. Any letters that you send order them to be left at William Crawford's on Blue Stone two miles below Culberson's, where we have left our horses. We will be there in three weeks.

They got back in less time than that.

Culberson's July 5th, 1774

Sir: I must beg a few days furlough about harvest to see my little crop secured. We have watched the War Road about the Glades and Paint Creek since I wrote you carefully though seen no fighting. This day met Capt. Floyd's company and set off with them tomorrow to the Glades, Paint Creek, and to Cole River, which will give some of the young boys a sweat. Three of my sons of bitches deserted from the company yesterday. A great drawback on the Meadow Creek company. I hear some of the new officers are not fond of being acquainted with our back parts here. I wish I had such an officer. I am dear sir regards your servant,

James Robertson

N. B. I suppose that you have trouble enough with one thing or another these times. My compliments to Mrs. Preston and I wish you both much joy of your young son.

I do not know that country well enough to identify the movements of this troop of soldiers but it is likely that they were on Blue Stone river in Mercer county and crossed over to the headwaters of Paint Creek into Fayette County and proceeded down to the Kanawha River and crossed to Glade Creek and then swung in a circle to the mouth of Cole River where it enters the Kanawha and up that stream to their headquarters on Blue Stone. The route would cover the east and west war road of the Shawnees from the Chillicothe towns to the Watauga River where Robertson was living at that time, and it seems that some of his soldiers at last were from the Meadow Creek in the western part of Greenbrier county.

It is well known that the Indians were abroad all through West Virginia that summer of 1774 and that the white settlers were in a panic, building forts in every neighborhood and moving into them.

Dunmore was raising his army the object of which was to destroy the Ohio Indian towns. The northern Indians, the Iroquois were friendly. The Mingos, an independent tribe made up of runaway Senecas under Logan were on the warpath.

Robertson was a leading man in the Watauga settlements, and that was about the most unprotected spot of all the Virginia towns. They were in a Virginia county but they had no close connection with the government of Virginia. Two years before they had formed a local government by choosing five men to enforce the general laws of Virginia. The court organized and elected one of their number clerk and another sheriff and for many years exercised undisputed power over the property and lives of the settlement. Robertson was one of the five. The records of the court have been lost but it was known that they had agreed to a constitution under the title of the Articles of the Watauga Association. The country finally fell to Tennessee and the Watauga Association constitutes the first governing body of that State. It was an effective thing. One case against a horse thief was as follows: Defendant arrested on a Monday; tried and convicted on Wednesday; hanged on Friday. The government lasted six years, until North Carolina having established her claim against Virginia to a continuation of her north and south sides to the Mississippi, appointed the members of the court to a new system. The original idea is attributed to James Robertson, and it was no doubt with a feeling that he could deal with young ensigns from England that he wished that he had a chance to discipline some of them that did not like the backwoods. It was the year of 1772, that the British government entered into a treaty with the Cherokees to clear the Watauga country of white settlers, but with Robertson as their spokesman they defied the governor of Virginia, but at the same time they gave the Cherokees eight thousand dollars worth of trade goods for the privilege of staying, which amount they proceeded to get back by collecting a certain sum of money per acre from each new settler that

came to live among them. Robertson was born in Brunswick county in Virginia, but had settled in North Carolina east of the mountains, and had moved from there to Watauga, but finding Virginia Robertson had with others claimed the country for Virginia, and thus we see him two years afterwards serving under Col. Wm. Preston.

Robertson held a commission as captain from Virginia under date of 1765, and it was in that capacity that he was acting under Col. Preston in 1774.

The general movement towards Point Pleasant had already begun. Another letter from Culberson's in August indicates that he was still on the look out. And the fact that he was a member of Shelby's company which marched from Lewisburg in September, 1774, and was in the battle in October, leads me to believe that Mrs. Robertson and the neighbors secured the little crop that year.

It would have been no unusual thing for a captain of the pioneer troops to go in as a private for there was a great equality in those armies. When Col. Charles Lewis, second in command at the battle, was shot and killed, he had a rifle in his hand and was using it as a common soldier.

Roosevelt says in his "Winning of the West," that Robertson's letters were almost as remarkable for their phenomenal bad spelling as for their shrewd common sense and homely, straightforward honesty.

I do not agree as to the spelling. I corrected a few words as I copied the two letters given above but had no occasion to exercise my art any further than any decent copyist or typesetter would willingly do. His handwriting is good and he has a good command of language.

His pet name for his soldiers might be disapproved by the polite society of these piping days of peace, but that letter was written under the stress of great danger and excitement. All over the territory known as the Western Waters, pioneers had made their homes in the woods and started their clearings. The Indians were engaged in wiping these homes out and killing the women and children in the most horrible and revolting manner, and many a man was driven wild by the sight of the mutilated bodies of his wife and children when he returned to the place that his home had been.

Then too many of these desertions were to the Indians. The greatest reproach in those days was that a man had "painted his face."

That Capt. Floyd was the assistant surveyor of Fincastle County under Col. Preston. He left Preston's house April 9, 1774, to spend the summer surveying. That was before the Indian hostilities had commenced. They took to canoes at the mouth of Elk River, April 16 before that they found the burning spring by the Kanawha. On April 20, they reached the mouth of the Kanawha where they found a body of twenty or thirty men in camp.

So this is what comes of my first effort at quodlibet. My first intention was to write of the Levite who passed by in the parable of the good Samaritan. I would have had a freer hand.

Notice To Stockholders

The regular annual Stockholders' meeting of the Pocahontas County Fair, Incorporated, will be held at Marlinton, W. Va. Saturday, December 8th, 1923, at 1.00 o'clock p. m. If you cannot attend in person, please execute Proxy, affixing a 10 cent Revenue stamp and mail to the undersigned in time to reach the office before date of meeting.

This 27th of November, 1923.
C. K. Livesay, Secretary.

BAZAAR AND SUPPER

The Christian Endeavor of the Oak Grove Presbyterian Church at Hillsboro will hold a bazaar in the Hillsboro High School on Thursday, December 5. All kinds of fancy hand made articles for sale, beginning at 4:30 o'clock. Also a chicken and oyster supper, with ice cream and cake. The public is cordially invited.

Railroad taxes and dividends

Last year the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Lines paid out more in taxes than in dividends. Out of every dollar received 3.80 cents was paid in taxes, while only 3.16 cents was paid in dividends.

In the year 1913 the total dividends paid to all railroad stockholders were about two and a half times the total railroad taxes. In the year 1922 the taxes paid were eleven per cent greater than the aggregate dividends.

The cash dividends paid in 1913 totaled \$322,300,406 and the taxes \$127,725,809. Dividends in 1922 totaled \$271,576,000 and taxes \$301,003,227. In the ten-year period, 1913 to 1922, therefore, taxes increased about 135 per cent while dividends decreased about sixteen per cent.

The increase in taxes is due in part to an increase of approximately five billion dollars in the property investment of the railroads between 1913 and 1922. But, while the total investment and value of railroad property devoted to public service during this period has increased about thirty-three per cent, and taxes upon the property 135 per cent, the total compensation to railway stockholders has decreased sixteen per cent.

W. J. HARAHAAN, President,
The Chesapeake and Ohio Railway.

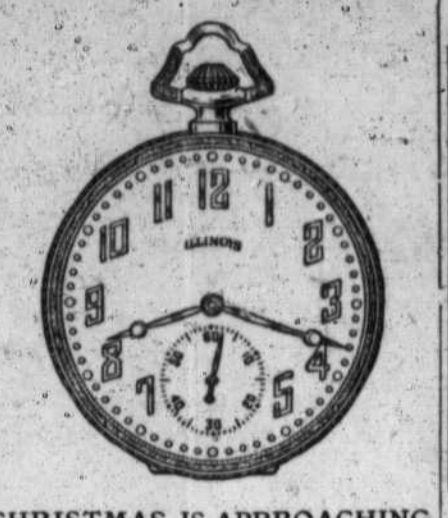
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Your valued patronage will be greatly appreciated.

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NOTICE

The following fiduciary account is before me for settlement—
H. C. Skaggs, Administrator of Uriah Heaver, deceased.
P. T. WARD,
Commissioner of Accounts.

NO HUNTING OR TRAPPING

All persons are warned not to trespass on the lands of the undersigned, especially by hunting and trapping.

J. E. KEE,
Marlinton, W. Va.

FOR SALE—Turkey coops. Geo. Rosen, Marlinton, W. Va.

STRAYED—From my place last June a red roan cow, dehorned, end off of left ear. Bell on when last seen. Any one knowing where she is please notify me and receive reward. M. F. Underwood, Huntersville, W. Va.

FOR SALE—In Cass one five room house and three good lots, 1' lot has 20 nice fruit trees 4 years old, write or call on W. W. Collins, Cass, W. Va. box 41.

FEED FOR SALE: 5 stacks hay, one large straw rack and a lot of fodder, or will feed yearling or 2 yr. old cattle by the month. Martin Judy, Cass, W. Va.

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Have left 10 thoroughbred Poland-China pigs, big type, for delivery in December, with pedigrees. \$5 00; with registration paper \$10. Let us know your wants.

E. H. Williams,
Marlinton, W. Va.

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All persons are hereby warned not to trespass in any way on the lands of the undersigned or premises under his control, especially by hunting and trapping.

W. McClintic,
Marlinton, W. Va.

TAXIDERMIST. Send me your trophies for correct mounting at reasonable prices. Satisfaction guaranteed. W. E. Blackhurst, Cass, W. Va.

Restaurant For Sale

I offer for sale my profitable restaurant business on Main Street in Marlinton. Fine location and good business, but I must sell on account of my wife's health. Apply to E. Yokum.

Marlinton, W. Va.

For Sale

Good Home At Bargain Price. 50 acres \$3,600. Excellent buildings water in house and barn, large orchard, some machinery. This house is in first class condition. Also 90 acre; stock, tools, poultry, bees, machinery and part of crop, only \$7,000. Part cash; easy terms. Catalog free

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Yellow pine, floor and ceiling, popular siding, casings and trimmings for inside and out. Door and window frames made to order, also dimension work.

R. S. JORDAN,
Marlinton, W. Va.

Notice

No hunting, no trespassing in any way on the lands of the undersigned. Samuel Kee & Hunter Kee.

Dec. 1

Turkeys

I have a few Mammoth Goldback Bronze Turkeys unsold yet. These are pedigree turkeys. The flock is headed by a 45 pound tom whose sire cost \$50. No better stock turkeys. Toms \$10, hens \$8. All orders must be in by November 20.

GEO. L. CLARK,
Hillsboro, W. Va.

Turkey Notice

For Sale. Mammoth Bronze Goldback, Bird Bros. strain, turkeys. Toms and hens not strained. Ready for delivery November 15 to Dec. 15

HARRY BIRD,
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Farm For Sale

A grazing farm of 191 acres, near Woodrow postoffice, all enclosed with wire fence; about 100 acres cleared; good 9-room house, cement cellar, good barns and other buildings. This is fine grass land, much of it is level. Plenty of water; fruit and timber for farm use. Three young orchards. Convenient to church and school.

T. S. DULANEY,
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White Holland Turkeys

Thoroughbred White Holland Turkeys. Fine specimens of this noted breed. (Toms \$10; hens \$8. f. o. b. Express office.) Single Comb Black Minorca cockerels \$1.50 each, while they last. Also a few pullets. Both turkeys and Minorcas took first prize at County Fair.

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FOR SALE—Surplus logging horses at attractive prices. For further information apply: The Meadow River Lumber Co., Rainelle, W. Va.

FOR SALE: A Delco Plant in first class condition. Can be seen at Cass Theatre, Cass, W. Va. If in need of a up to date light plant this one can be bought right. C. C. Clendens.

FOR SALE: A fine Duroc Jersey sow, eligible for registry, or will exchange for a male Duroc Jersey. A lot of fine Barred Rock pullets and cockerels. W. A. Barlow, Onoto, W. Va.

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Courts: Pocahontas and adjoining counties and the Supreme Court of Appeals.

F. RAYMOND HILL,
Attorney-at-Law,
Marlinton, W. Va.
Will practice in the courts of Pocahontas and Greenbrier counties, and in the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia.

ANDREW PRICE
Attorney-at-Law
Marlinton, W. Va.

W. A. BRATTON,
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Marlinton, W. Va.
Prompt and careful attention given to all legal business.

N. G. McNEEL,
Attorney-at-Law,
Marlinton, W. Va.
Will practice in the courts of Pocahontas and adjoining counties, and in the Court of Appeals of the state of West Virginia.

L. M. McCLINTIC,
Attorney-at-Law,
Marlinton, W. Va.
Will practice in the courts of Pocahontas and adjoining counties and in the Supreme Court of Appeals.

E. T. WARD
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW
Marlinton, W. Va.

J. E. BUCKLEY
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Notice

Stanley Hayes, Chiropractor, will be at Cass and Dunmore for one month, beginning October 22. Hours at Cass: (At residence of J. W. Bible) 9 to 12 a. m. and 5 to 8 p. m. and by appointment. Hours at Dunmore: 1 to 3 p. m.

FOR SALE—Mammoth Bronze turkeys, tom \$10, hens \$8. Mrs. Earl Kee, Marlinton, W. Va.